

THE BRITISH NOTE DELIVERED BY SIR ROBERT CRAIGIE
TO THE FOREIGN MINISTER ON DECEMBER 16, 1937

Your Excellency,

I have the honour on instructions from His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom to address Your Excellency on the subject of attacks made by Japanese aircraft and land forces on British warships and merchant shipping at Wuhu and near Nanking on 12th December. These incidents clearly raise grave issues.

2. At Wuhu a British tug which had conveyed from Nanking His Majesty's Consul, the British Military Attaché and the Flag-Captain to the British Rear-Admiral, Yangtze, was attacked by Japanese machinegun fire after transferring these officers to H.M.S. Ladybird. The latter proceeded to join the tug in order to protect her, when she observed a Japanese field gun battery firing on merchant ships concentrated above the Asiatic Petroleum Company's installation. Firing continued and was directed at H.M.S. Ladybird herself.

3. There were four direct hits on this vessel: one naval rating was killed, another was seriously wounded and there were several minor casualties including Flag-Captain. A direct hit was also seen to be sustained by the British merchant ship Suiwo. H.M.S. Bee then arrived on the scene

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and was also fired on by the shore battery. The Commander of H.M.S. Bee landed to protest and was informed by Colonel Hashimoto the senior Japanese military officer then at Wuhu, that firing on warships was due to a mistake but that he had orders to fire on every ship on the river. At a later interview the same officer stated categorically that if any ships moved on the river they would be fired on and, despite protests, H.M.S. Bee and Ladybird after berthing remained covered by guns at point-blank range.

4. Near Hsia San-shan above Nanking where British merchant ships were concentrated in a part of the river previously designated by the Japanese Commander-in-Chief as a safety-zone, three separate bombing attacks were made by Japanese aircraft on them and on H.M. Ships Cricket and Scarab which were with them.

5. His Majesty's Government have now been glad to receive Your Excellency's note of the 14th December offering the profound apology of the Imperial Japanese Government for the attacks on His Majesty's Ships, stating that measures were immediately taken to prevent the recurrence of such incidents and adding that they will deal suitably with those responsible and pay the necessary compensation.

6. His Majesty's Government observe that Your Excellency's note makes no mention of the attacks on British merchant vessels

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and I am instructed to request that an assurance may be given that all that is said in that note applies equally to these attacks.

7. His Majesty's Government take particular note of the statement that those responsible will be suitably dealt with. Adequate punishment of those responsible for the particular attacks under discussion seems indeed to His Majesty's Government to be the only method by which further outrages can be prevented.

8. His Majesty's Government cannot but recall the previous incidents in which the Japanese Government have expressed regret for attacks made on British nationals and property and have given assurances that adequate steps had been taken to prevent any repetition. They call to mind the attack made on His Majesty's Ambassador to China while travelling by road from Nanking to Shanghai, the subsequent attack on motorcars conveying British officials on a similar journey, the attacks on British civilians and military posts on the defense perimeter at Shanghai, as well as other incidents, and the repeated assurances of the Japanese Government of their intention fully to respect the interests of third Powers in the present conflict with China. It is clear that the steps hitherto taken by the Japanese Government to prevent such attacks have so far failed in this purpose and His Majesty's Government must

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now ask to be informed that measures have actually been taken of a character which will put a definite stop to the incidents of which they complain.

I avail myself of this opportunity to renew to Your Excellency the assurance of my highest consideration.

Signed: R. L. Craigie.

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C E R T I F I C A T E

Statement of Source and Authenticity

I, HAYASHI, Kaoru, Chief of the Archives Section, Japanese Foreign Office, hereby certify that the document hereto attached in English consisting of 3 pages and entitled "The British Note delivered by Sir Robert Craigie to the Foreign Minister on December 16, 1937." is an exact and true copy of an official document of the Japanese Foreign Office.

Certified at Tokyo,
on this 5th day of April, 1947.

/S/ K. Hayashi
Signature of Official

Witness: /S/ K. Urabe

燕湖及南京ニ於ケル英國艦船攻撃ニ關スル十二月十六日附廣田外務大臣宛英國大使公文（昭和十二年十二月三十日）

一、本使ハ本國政府ノ訓令ニ基キ閣下ニ對シ十二月十二日燕湖及南京ニ於テ日本軍航空機及陸上部隊カ英國軍艦及商船ヲ攻撃シタル事件ニ關シ茲ニ申進ムルノ光榮ヲ有ス此等事件カ重大ナル問題ヲ提起スルモノナルハ明白ナリ。

二、燕湖ニ於テ南京ヨリ英國領事、英國陸軍武官及英國楊子江派遣少將附參謀長ヲ塔載シ來レル英國曳船ハ右塔乗者カ英國軍艦「レデイバード」ニ乘リ移リタル後日本側機關銃ノ射撃ヲ受ケタリ「レデイバード」ハ護衛ノ爲右曳船ニ接近セルカ其際亞細亞石油會社施設物ノ上流ニ集結中ノ商船ニ對シ日本軍野砲陣ヨリ射撃シ居レルヲ見受ケタル處右射撃ハ引續キ「レデイバード」ニ向ケラレタリ。

三、同艦ニハ彈丸四發命中シ水兵一名死亡他ノ一名重傷ヲ負ヒ參謀長ヲ始メ數名ノ輕傷者ヲ出タシタリ尙英國商船級和號ニモ彈丸一發命中セルヲ看取セリ次テ英國軍艦「ビー」現場ニ到着セル處之亦沿岸砲陣ヨリ砲撃セラレタリ「ビー」艦々長ハ抗議ヲ爲ス爲上陸セル處燕湖ニ於

ケル日本陸軍先任將校橋本大佐ハ軍艦ニ對スル砲撃ハ過ニ暴キタルモノナルモ江上ニ於ケル一切ノ船舶ニ對シ射撃スヘキ命令ヲ受ケ居レル旨述ヘタリ其後會見ノ際同將校ハ何レノ船舶モ江上ヲ移動シタル場合ハ砲撃セラルヘキ旨斷言シ「ビー」及「レディバード」ハ抗議セルニモ拘ラス投錨後直射距離ニテ野砲ヲ同ケラレ后リタルモノナリ。

四、南京上流下三山附近ニ於テ義ニ日本軍司令長官カ安全地帶トシテ指定セル水域ニ英國商船集中シ居リシ處日本軍航空機ハ右商船及之ト共ニ在リタル英國軍艦「クリケット」及「スカラブ」ニ對シ三度ニ直リ爆撃ヲ加ヘタリ。

五、英國軍艦ニ對スル攻撃ニ付日本政府カ深甚ナル陳謝ヲ提示シ此種事件再發防止ノ爲直ニ措置アリタル旨ヲ述ヘ更ニ責任者ニ對シテハ適當ナル處置ヲ執ルヘク又必要ナル賠償ヲナスヘキ旨附記セル十二月十四日附貴翰ヲ受領シタルハ英國政府ノ欣幸トスル所ナリ。

六、英國政府ハ貴翰中英國商船ニ對スル攻撃ニ付言及無キヲ認メ本使ニ對シ貴翰御申越ノ次第ハ總テ此等商船ニ對スル攻撃ニ付テモ同様適用セラルヘキ旨ノ保障ヲ求ムル様訓令越シタリ。

七、英國政府ハ責任者ハ適當ニ處置セラルヘシトノ御申越ヲ特ニ重視ス
ルモノナリ英國政府ハ本件個々攻撃事件ノ責任者ヲ充分處罰スルコト
コソ今後ノ此種暴行ヲ防止スル唯一ノ方法ナリト思量ス。

八、英國政府ハ茲ニ日本政府カ英國臣民及前座ニ對スル攻撃ニ付遺憾ノ
意ヲ表シ之カ再發防止ノ爲充分ナル處置ヲ執リタル旨保障セラレタル
諸事件ヲ想起セサルヲ得サルモノナリ、英國政府ハ其駐英大使カ陸路
南京ヨリ上海ニ向フ途上ニ於テ受ケタル攻撃、其後同様ノ旅行ノ途上
ニ於テ英國官吏ヲ塔撃セル目動車ニ對シ加ヘラレタル攻撃、上海周邊
防備區域ニ於テ英國非戦闘員及守備陣地ニ加ヘラレタル攻撃及其他ノ
事件竝ニ現下ノ日支紛争中第三國ノ利益ヲ充分尊重スル意圖ナル旨ノ
日本政府果次ノ保障ヲ想起スルモノナリ此種攻撃防止ノ爲日本政府カ
觀察執ラレタル措置ハ今迄ノ所其目的ヲ對セザリシコト明白ニシテ英
國政府ハ其不滿トスル諸事件ヲ確實ニ防止スルカ如キ性質ノ措置カ現
在ニ執ラレタル旨ノ通報ヲ要請セサルヲ得サル次第ナリ。

文書ノ出所竝ニ成立ニ關スル證明書

(三號)

自分、林縣ハ外務省文書課長ノ職ニ居ル者ナル處茲ニ添付セラレタル日本語ニ依ツテ書カレ四頁ヨリ成ル蕪湖及南京ニ於ケル英國艦船攻撃ニ關スル十二月十六日附廣田外務大臣宛英國大使公文ト題スル書類ハ日本政府(外務省)ノ保管ニ係ル公文書ノ正確ニシテ眞實ナル寫シナルコトヲ證明ス

昭和二十二年四月五日 於東京

林

縣

右署名捺印ハ自分ノ面前ニ於テ爲サレタリ

同日 於 同 所

立會人 浦 部 勝 馬

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